

TITLE: THE PSYCHO PATHOLOGY OF PRE SENILE DEMENTIAS A
SURVEY.

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AB The concept of presenile dementia is too narrow and restrictive, but it has not been replaced to date by any other equivalent expression, and hence is still in use. Practically any group of diseases can provoke presenile dementia. For reasons of preventive medical care, it is considered important to achieve broad-spectrum sensitization on the problem of progressive functional failure of the brain, and large-scale screening is urged. Disease patterns of affective disorders or of schizophrenia will frequently render proper differential diagnosis difficult. Wrong diagnoses in this respect are stated to be of the order of about 30%, as communicated by a catamnestic study. Greatest diagnostic prudence is mandatory in any disease pattern which appears contradictory from a psychopathological point of view, and which does not present a uniform pattern or seems improbable or even impossible. Besides treating genuine or false presenile dementias in a suitable manner, and their early identification, the social framework surrounding these presenile dementias with unfavorable prognosis must not be neglected. It seems that eugenic guidance of families in whom Huntington's chorea runs on a hereditary basis, has remained an unsolved problem to date which merits closer attention.